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YOUTH, LOVE AND MEMORY.

BY CHARLES CONNOLLY.

YOUTH built an altar

Where Love might adore

The bright saint of his worship

Through time evermore.

And when it is so wretched

Flowers from the stem,

And entwined them with many

A beautiful gem.

And kindled a flame there

That should not decay,

While love was to tend it,

And watch it, and pray'd

Then Youth onward passed,

With the sweetest smile

That love ever wore

On his brow all the while;

And Love at Youth's altar

Gave hardly a sigh

That a being of love

Had forsworn gone by,

But alas! Never more

Was his smile half so bright,

As when it blest Youth

With its radiant delight!

Love at length weary grew;

By the altar he slept;

While Memory entered

And never left him;

For while Love was sleeping

The glory had gone

Of the fire that once

On Youth's altar had shone;

She turned to Memory;

The smoldering ray,

And Love woke up sly—

And then stole away!

Her task when complete,

She turned around them,

To wake Love to his watch

By the altar again;

But sad she found him,

That dear Love had flown;

And Memory stood at

Youth's altar alone!

But still in her sorrow,

She looks through her tears

For a glimpse of lost Love

On the desert of years.

One summer eternal

Its roses were shed

O'er Youth's sleeping pathway,

Wherever it led;

And Love still pursues him,

While Memory keeps

Her secret in her altar

And evermore weeps.

But if angels in Heaven

E'er mourn above,

It is when they see Memory

Weeping for Love.

The Ocean Girl: or, THE BOY BUCCANEER.

BY LAFAYETTE LAFOREST.

AUTHOR OF "CRUISER CRUSOE," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER I.

NED DRAKE AND DIRTRICK.

WERE we to dive into the secret history of boys' hearts, we should find that, while few had not at one time wished themselves Robinson Crusoe, scarce one had ever wished himself a pirate! The very word is abhorrent to the natural instincts, and only the utterly lost, no matter what may have been their social scale, have so disgraced both bravery and honor.

At a time when the police of the seas was somewhat more carelessly kept than it is now; when, despite the men-of-war which kept watch and ward near every shore, despite the revenue cutters that haunted every port—smugglers did a rare trade, and the business of slavers was at a premium—the coast of England especially afforded facilities for the fitting out of lawless cruisers, which, since the introduction of steam, can never occur again.

No more can a taut schooner lie hidden in some creek, or swash, or gut, awaiting such a wind as shall enable it, by means of its light draught, to choose its own time, and run forth while its royal enemy is bearing up to windward; no more dare the crews of such craft to use violence with coast-guard men, or tars who are sent to board her—the romance of smuggling is at an end.

But at the time of which we speak, it was very different. Then, under a mistaken policy, the temptation to smuggling between Great Britain and other shores was so great the facilities so wonderful, and that, though every point—north, south, east, and west—had its contraband Cove, cavern, or ruin, scarcely ever were they betrayed; while some, though their haunts were known, defied the most earnest researches of the minnows of the law for two centuries.

Somewhere near where the Nore Light rides, a guardian angel on the English coast, lay at anchor, on a certain night, a taut, smart, and well-looking brigantine, that any sea tyro could have told by daylight, had reefed all its studding-sail gear, crossed its royal yards, put on its chasing gear, probably put its powder on board—in a word, was ready to take its departure at any moment.

It was eleven o'clock, and the quiescent ocean to the eastward seemed, in the murky light, something like a vast prairie, except that there was more sound upon the waters than would, perhaps, at night have disturbed the vast plains of the extensive West. On board the brigantine they seemed to keep but a harbor watch, no one being visible on deck until the hour we have mentioned, when three individuals might have been seen moving along the deck. Next instant a boat that towed astern was hauled up, and all entered it.

The bow of the vessel was seaward, denoting that the tide was running up, which was of advantage to the light skiff, its way being in that direction. The crew that entered it appeared to consist of two men and a boy, the latter seating himself in the stern

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Joseph Gantling well, showing off his firm and well-proportioned figure to advantage.

Before him on the table were a chart, a pair of compasses, a bottle, some glasses, and a pipe, like a true sailor, the buccaneering smuggler being fond of his tobacco, of which, on shore and on board, he had the choicest that could be found from York River to Spanish Main, from the Mediterranean to Latakia.

The young officer stood still, waiting his captain's pleasure.

"By the pricking of my thumbs, something wicked this way comes," he said, lifting his head with a light laugh. "Sit down, Ned; I want a long and quiet talk with you. There's the grog, and there's the water; there's a pipe, and there's to be no tobacco."

"Thank you, sir," he cried; "I will wet my lips with nantz, but no tobacco. I'm a counter-blast."

"Ay, ay, boy!" said the skipper; "just as you will. But now to business. The night is far gone, and we may have to sail early. I want you to take in every word I say; listen, and remember. But Ned, as you and I may differ, I want one promise—agree or not to my proposals, and 'tis the same between us—but, ay, or nay, on your solemn word, under no circumstances will you reveal what I shall say."

"On my solemn word, all that passes shall be a profound secret," replied Edward.

"'Tis well—spoken like a man. Now hearken, I am a rough sailor. I have, when my blood has been up, closed my ears to the voice of mercy, and seen blood shed without blanching. I have defied, and ever shall defy, the laws which forbid me from exchanging my tea, spirits, silks, and laces for other people's money. Men fear me, the mother hags her child with awe at mention of my name. I am to the world a smuggler, a pirate, a corsair—what have I been to you?"

This was said hoarsely, and with deep emotion.

"A kind and good father," said the boy, warmly.

"No! no!" exclaimed Gantling, with a slight shudder; "not a father, but a friend and protector."

"Well, sir, a generous protector."

"Even so let it be. You have seen me rough, brutal and violent; making my very crew shiver with fear. Did you ever fear me?"

"Never."

"I like your frankness, Edward. Well, forty and odd years make a great change in a man. Much as I love my sea-boat, that sits the waters like a swan, and cuts them like an arrow, I am weary of this life and would end it."

"Sir?"

"Think not I am going to sell my brigantine, buy me a lust-house, like a Dutch Meinherr, and settle down into a swilling, tobacco-smoking old fogey. Not I! I dream of something better. What say, boy, to one more cruise that shall bring us more grit to the mill than any we have ever tried, and then away to some island of the sunny south, known to me, and known as yet to none besides; where Nature asks not even for our labor, but gives in rich abundance to all who will take? There, my boy, with this vessel and a chosen crew, we should be kings, sea-kings, with thousands to obey our will, from graybeards to girls dusky as night, but night with all her stars, their sunburnt blood mantling such clear, nut-brown skins as—well, never mind. You shall see my coral beauties, I call them mine, as, wrecked there once, I have left a memory of two behind."

"Where is this island?" asked the youth, half-fascinated.

"Under the burning sun, my lad, many months from here. That I consider settled. Never did I see such a land, never so gentle and amiable a people—naked, they used me well; but with a ship at my back, and wealth to give them, all they set store by in the land is our own, Ned. I will be king, you shall be my hen."

Edward laughed, but at the same time the gleaming of his eyes showed that he liked the idea.

"I was once," continued Joseph Gantling, speaking now between his set teeth, "I was once in the service of my country. Why or wherefore I left it, it boots not to tell. I left it, and though still I am an Englishman, and love my native land, I loathe and abhor her tyrant rulers, who—no matter what they did. When I think of it my blood boils, my cheek is coral red, and I feel that I must go mad, or be avenged."

"Avenged!" said Ned Drake; "how can you be more avenged than you have been?"

If depriving them of revenue is any satisfaction, you have done that to a pretty tune."

"The theft of a hen-roost or a brood of lubberly turkeys affects them as much," continued Captain Gantling, bitterly; "but I have them now; I can now make the hearts of some in high places bleed; I can—I can!" he gasped, "revel in their gold; I can hold in my hand lives dear to my very enemies themselves; I can have such vengeance as shall make all England run the day she raised her hand against one who—no matter—in a matter—will this restless tongue never wag like other men's? Now comes the question—Will aid me, boy?"

"I must know more," said Edward, quietly.

"Know more!" cried the skipper, while a blood-red spot burned upon his cheek.

"How dare?"

"I dare do any thing but obey orders blindfold!" exclaimed Ned.

"True true!" muttered Gantling. "Chip of the old block. I must wholly trust him, or not at all."

"The best plan."

"I will. To-morrow or the day after, or when it suits our noble rulers, a vessel, a large East Indian, sails past here on her way to distant parts. She is richly freighted, boy; she carries out treasure untold; she takes men of mark and rare and name, and noble women, and joyous, light-hearted girls—and, and—mine enemy."

"Well, sir?"

"Well, sir," repeated Joseph Gantling, with an oath, "you would weary a saint. That ship, cargo, crew and passengers will be mine. I mean to have them all!"

"What to do with?" asked Ned, quietly.

"To do with—the ship to burn, the treasure to keep, the crew may do as they please, the passengers to sell, mine enemy to slay," cried the captain, wildly.

"And the young women, sir?"

"We shall want wives in our new kingdom, as perhaps all may not care for dark skins and dewy eyes."

"Then, sir," said Edward, coldly, rising, "seek some other accomplice; for not only will I not be yours, but you are start on this

fell enterprise, I shall leave the brigantine."

A lioness shorn of her cubs looked not more fierce or remorseless than Gantling at this word.

"You young whelp!" he cried, hoarsely; "leave the brigantine!"

"Yes, sir. But listen. I have been brought up by you. I have, with every fresh hour of my life learned to love and admire the life of a free rover of the seas. But, while ready to aid you in winning this ship, in gaining this treasure, the fight once over, I must have your solemn pledge that no human life shall suffer, and that passengers and crew shall go where they list unharmed, even if you put them on a desert and aban-

doned island."

The corsair thought deeply as the other spoke. He was not all bad. Real or imaginary ills had driven him to a course of life which usually blunts every noble sympathy, and gives full swing to hate, ambition, guile, arming a man's soul against himself as much as against the great mass of mankind. Those who were aware of his early history, said that what he might have been few could say; and yet his early exploits were such as to give promise not only of greatness but much nobility of character ere he knew himself a villain—guilt's worst instrument, driven forth to war against mankind.

"No word was spoken more. The chase

was a stern one, and had circumstances al-

most, though not a long one, but this the proximity of the ship prevented, as in

twenty minutes, if not captured, they would be under her guns. But, another danger had to be avoided. While the royal cruiser was coming up with wind and tide, the Ocean Girl was lying at her anchors, without the smallest proof that man existed within the mass of black and inanimate iron.

"It's a beautiful sloop," said the captain, with a smile.

"I'm sure of it," said Ned.

"Curse light on her! what is the mean-

ing of it?" cried Gantling.

"We must get it ready; let them at sails and masts."

"Ay, ay, sir!"

In a very few minutes the outer gun was

ready, and the crack shot of the Ocean Girl,

of all others, Dirtrick, was taking aim.

Then an immense body of smoke belched

from the muzzle of the cannon, followed by

a sheet of vivid fire, and Edward, leaping

on the hindmost gun, saw the ship fly,

and one sail fly from its bolt ropes. Then

the foretopmast bent, and fell steadily over

the side.

At the same moment the drum of the

royal cruiser was heard rattling across the

water, beating to quarters, but the buccaneer

made no response, cracking on all sail, until

his tall spars and cloud of canvas were lost

in a dense fog, that came rolling and spreading

like a cloud over the German Ocean.

"It by my own," said the captain, with a hot and fiery flush.

"I thought you were an Englishman."

"Hush! hush!" exclaimed Captain Gantling, in a low, husky tone; "talk not to me thus; a pirate has no country!"

And he turned away, leaving Edward, accustomed as he was to the chief's manner and abruptness, somewhat astonished at a sen-

tence which went to his very heart; he who

adored his native land, and would gladly

have served it, had he not thought himself

excluded forever from a full pardon, by reason

of his bringing up.

The cruiser had evidently been selected

for its swiftness; the Ocean Girl was a

splendid sailor, but for once it had met its

match.

"We shall have to fight," said the com-

mander, in a low tone.

"I hope not, sir," replied Edward; "for

then adieu to treasure ship, to our bonnie

cruiser, and the dusky girls with the coral

lips."

"Now Drake was but a boy, but the edu-

cation he had received had made him more

advanced than his age would warrant. He

knew Captain Gantling well, and therefore

urged no prudent motives to make him

careful, but rather laid before him the

baits the power of which he had earned to

himself.

"That's what I am thinking about, Ned;

but see how he hugs the wind, and keeps to

the first time in his life. Van Taggart went

out on the streets alone. But he might

just as well have remained at home. He

could not sing; his heart was too heavy for

that, and besides, Romney had been the

alto, and he had never tried a solo before.

He could not even play; he thought the

violin sounded low and strange, and he was

forever jumbling one tune with another.

At noon, he gave up altogether, and went

home without a penny!

"I couldn't do nothing without Romney,"

he said to his mother; and then they both

cried the afternoon away.

she said; "and if you are not, mamma will send for the doctor and he will make you well."

"Can the doctor make me well?" asked Romney, opening his feverish eyes wide.

"Yes, my son."

"But, you said once—" He stopped.

"Well, what did I say?"

"That it was God who made us sick, and made us well too, when we would be good."

"Yes, I said so, darling," replied the poor mother; "and so He will. But, the doctor uses drugs and the knowledge God gave him to cure us when He doesn't want us to die."

"But, God wants us to die sometimes, doesn't He?" asked Romney.

"Yes, my son; when He wants us for heaven. He calls us."

The little fellow paused, and looked up through his tears into his mother's face.

"Do you think He wants me?" he asked, at length. "Now?"

"Oh, I hope not, my child! Your poor widowed mother and Van would be very lonely without you."

She could not speak more; her tears were choking her; and Van, who had crept up to the bedside, nestled close to her, and buried his tear-stained face in the bedclothes.

The next morning, Romney Taggart was much worse—so bad, in fact, that his mother could do nothing but nurse him, and for the first time in his life. Van Taggart went out on the streets alone. But he might just as well have remained at home. He could not sing; his heart was too heavy for that, and besides, Romney had been the alto, and he had never tried a solo before.

He could not even play; he thought the violin sounded low and strange, and he was forever jumbling one tune with another.

"I couldn't do nothing without Romney," he said to his mother; and then they both cried the afternoon away.

CHAPTER IX.

BROTHER AND SISTER.

WHEN Elinor's absence was discovered, on the morning following her flight, there was considerable excitement at Walnut Grove. Mrs. Waterson called the household together promptly, and said: "The poor creature, doubtless ashamed of herself, has risked her life by running off in the night-time. Now that she has gone, however, let her coming, as well as her stay here, never be mentioned by any of you. If I ever hear this disagreeable subject alluded to in this house, I will be very angry with the offending person."

It sounded very much like a prepared declamation, but all the servants promised silence and the affair was over.

That same afternoon, Lucy Waterson returned from school. She was a slight, pretty girl, simple enough to look at, keen and shrewd withal.

She had scarce been half an hour at the Grove, when Chauncey invited her out for a stroll

quarrel about this girl! I will confess that I was smitten by her charms, and only that I subsequently discovered how utterly unworthy she was of an honest man's love and admiration, I believe I would have married her."

"Unworthy!" repeated Lucy. "Elinor Gregg unworthy? There must surely be some mistake here."

"I wish there was," he replied. "Over a year ago, I discovered that, on her leaving school, she formed the acquaintance of a rough farmer, who did not bear the best sort of a character, and, might before last, Rand and I found her almost opposite the Mill Creek House, lying in the mud."

Lucy Watterson clasped her hands in utter astonishment, and looked her brother searchingingly in the eyes as he proceeded.

"While Rand carried her here, I went for a doctor; and it was not until I returned that I knew the wanderer was Elinor Gregg."

"Go on," said Lucy, almost breathless. "Where is she now?"

"That I can not tell you. The night she came here she gave birth to a child, and the next night she fled the house."

"She left which time—"

"Since which time she has neither been seen nor heard from by any person connected with our house."

"Did she leave no clue—no trace?"

"None whatever."

"And the baby?"

"She took with her."

"This sounds like a romance," said Lucy.

"Poor Elinor Gregg, and I always thought she was such a nice girl!"

"So did I," replied Chauncey. "I would have almost staked my life on her honesty. But, you see it's hard to judge some people."

"Very hard," said Lucy, with her eyes fixed upon the ground; "but, did mamma know that Elinor was your old favorite?"

"No; I thought best not to tell her. You know mother is so queer, and she might think that, possibly, I had something to do with Elinor's sin."

"And you mean to keep this a secret?"

"Well, I presume you are right," said Lucy, after a pause; "but, Chauncey, who are you going to marry?"

"Can't you guess?"

"Oh, I'm tired guessing! Please tell me."

"Then I will not tax your patience further. The young lady is named Grace Alward."

"Grace Alward! Pretty, charming Grace Alward!" Lucy was all enthusiasm now. Her eyes sparkled; her cheeks glowed, and she clapped her hands in rapture.

"Yes, Grace," repeated Chauncey, "and I'm very glad my little sister thinks so highly of her brother's intended wife."

"I'm perfectly delighted with the idea of having Grace for a sister. Besides, Chauncey, I think marriage will settle you down some," replied Lucy; "and you know you have been a little wild."

"I confess you I have been a trifle wild—but not more so than most young men of my age, and I am quite ready and willing to put on the matrimonial manacles at the earliest possible moment."

"And when is the wedding to take place?" questioned Lucy. "I hope it will be soon, for I can't bear waiting."

"In September some time; the precise day has not been fixed," was the answer.

"Why, Chauncey, that is eight mortal weeks yet!"

"And what are eight weeks? A mere pigment of time."

There was a light, bounding footfall upon the grass behind them; then a rippling, silvery girl's laugh, and then Grace Alward placed a hand upon Lucy Watterson's shoulder.

"Welcome, school-girl! When did you escape the dormitory?"

The two girls greeted each other warmly, just as girls would do; for an instant were folded in each other's arms, just as girls would be; then the trio started for the house again.

"How did you know we were here?" asked Chauncey.

"Your mother told me, and so I ran away from Ma to find you."

"You will stay at the Grove all night, then," said Lucy, entreatingly. "It will be too late to go home after tea; besides, I want to talk to you. I have a fund of information for you."

Yes, Grace would remain, and ere the two girls went to sleep that night, they had talked over the past and present, and dreamed of the bright future that was to dawn for both.

CHAPTER X.

OUT IN THE WORLD.

DURING the first fortnight of Elinor Gregg's residence in the old house by the river, Chauncey Watterson visited her every day; or, rather, every evening, for he was too well known in the city to make his visits to such a questionable locality publicly, and in daylight. He was very tender and kind to Elinor, and there was a sort of considerate deference he always paid to her, which would have pleased some women so much that they would never have asked for any thing more. But not so with Elinor Gregg. Morning, noon and night her mind was occupied with dismal thoughts of her dreadful position, and Chauncey never visited her that she did not question him concerning their prospective marriage.

"You can not know, Chauncey, what terrible thoughts come to me sometimes," she said one night, sitting by the fire, propped up with pillows, and looking very pale and pretty.

He had one arm on the mantel, and was gazing into the fire in a dreamy, abstracted way when she spoke, but her words were so solemn, and there had been such a death-like silence before, that he started and colored slightly.

"Well, that's all your own fault," he answered.

"My fault!" She bit her nether lip and looked up, astonished, as the exclamation escaped her.

"Yes, your own fault," he reiterated. "Have I not tried to make you as comfortable as possible? have you expressed a desire that I have not had gratified at once? have you asked for any thing money could purchase that I have not bought for you? Elinor, I think you are treating me unkindly—positively unkindly."

She did not reply at once; she was amazed—so much amazed, indeed, that she could not do any thing but stare up at that man, whose brow was like a thunder-storm now, and whose eyes glittered with the light of a terrible menace.

"Elinor's face flushed; her lips relaxed their rigidity, and she nestled her face close to the baby's, and sobbed once more.

"Poor! poor baby!" she exclaimed. "God help you, and God help me."

at length. "You sit there and stare at one as if you had lost your wits!"

Her dark eyes grew luminous, and her scarlet lips became almost as pale as her cheeks. "I have lost my wits," she said, at length, pausing to catch her breath between each word, "and I have lost that which is worse than reason—my faith in you!"

He shrugged his shoulders and scowled again.

"You must not try to frighten me with ugly looks," she continued. "I have passed the point where scowling affrights; I stand upon the brink of a horrible abyss; I feel the rock on which I stand—and which I once thought so firm—crumbling into sand beneath my feet; then why should I fear the glance of an eye or the curl of a lip?"

Chauncey Watterson, I believe I'm growing mad."

"So do I," he said. "You talk like a fool."

"I have up to this time acted like one," she replied, "but from this hour I shall be wise."

"Indeed!" he said; "wisdom is always welcome."

"Yes, but my wisdom came too late, I fear. Chauncey Watterson, I wish to ask you one simple question."

"Go on; but, pray you, let it be not too simple."

"This is no time for levity, sir," she exclaimed, fiercely. "Do you intend to marry me, and give to that innocent child sleeping there a name?"

He glanced over at the bed where the little rosy stranger slept, and then said: "To be candid with you, Elinor, I think we had better come to an understanding at once. You are a poor girl, and, had I not met you, would doubtless have married a coarse, vulgar countryman, and settled meekly down to the drudgery of farm work. You are too handsome, too polished, too intelligent, to appreciate such an existence, and you will one day bless me for saving you from such social slavery as would unquestionably have been your lot!"

She riveted her eyes upon him as he spoke, and pressed her hand to her heart to still its wild beatings. "Go on," she said, when he paused: "go on!"

"I have determined to do the clever thing by you," he said, folding his hands behind his back, and speaking in a matter-of-fact way that chilled Elinor Gregg through and through. "I will send you and your child abroad; I will have you educated, either as an artist, or as an actress, whichever profession you find most congenial and best calculated to give the greatest scope to your talents. You shall never want for money; I will settle one thousand dollars a year upon you."

Elinor was very weak, but she stood up now erect and rigid as marble, and her graceful, rounded figure, draped in flowing muslin, looked very classic and beautiful, even to that man who had grown tired of her. She tried to speak, but something hard in her throat was suffocating her. Staggering to the window, she threw up the sash, and the moonlight fell upon her a mellow flood, making her look whiter, more spindly, than before.

The man was frightened. He thought she was about to leap from the window, and, starting forward, he caught her by the wrist.

She shook his hand off, and, lifting herself until she appeared almost two inches taller than she actually was, she said, with more bitterness in her voice than can be described:

"You are very kind, sir—very, very kind; but I would not accept a cent from you, no—not to save my soul from the horrors of eternity. I am not so low as to sell myself, whatever I have done, because I loved you."

"Oh, come; be reasonable; talk sense," he said.

"Well, then, I'll talk sense," was the reply. "From this night, Chauncey Watterson, we are mortal foes. You are a base scoundrel, who took advantage of a poor, unsophisticated girl, and ruined her bright prospects to satisfy your taste for conquest, I presume. But, your victory will only be a transient one; the time will come, Chauncey Watterson, when you will be made to forgive you."

"This is idle raving," he interrupted; "both unbecoming and impudent."

"And you are the man to judge of what is becoming!" She was sneering at him now—"you, who live only to deceive and blight. But, remember—"

"Bosh!" he exclaimed; "you act like a she-dragon. I did not come here to be bullied in this way, and I beg of you to restrain your temper for an instant and I'll leave the house. You can then rant a will. Old Meg, I suppose, has a taste for high tragedy and boisterous declamation. Thank Heaven I have not that lever which, without a falserum, moves the world! MONEY! But he is late."

She glanced toward an alabaster clock, ticking silently under a crystal shade.

"What if that dark-brown man failed to give him my note? Or, can—"

She paused, and an anxious, uneasy frown came to her face. But she resumed:

"Can it be true, as I have heard, that Lorin Gray loves that pale-faced thing, old Silas Raynor's daughter? I saw her once—a weak-eyed, yet sweet-featured, child. There is nothing grand or striking about her to attract a man like Lorin Gray. Besides that, she is as poor as starving poverty itself. Ha! ha! ha! I will not credit such an idle word."

"Yes, Lorin Gray loves that pale-faced thing, old Silas Raynor's daughter? I saw her once—a weak-eyed, yet sweet-featured, child. There is nothing grand or striking about her to attract a man like Lorin Gray. Besides that, she is as poor as starving poverty itself. Ha! ha! ha! I will not credit such an idle word."

"You will never see me here again," replied Elinor.

"As you wish," he answered, and was gone.

She stood still, her hair floating down her snowy gown, and her eyes, dark and brilliant, fixed upon the spot where Chauncey Watterson had stood.

"No," she muttered; "you will never see me again here. Perhaps you will never see me again, anywhere." Then she thought of how she had loved him; how kind and sweet he once was; and, bursting into tears, she fell upon her knees, exclaiming: "Oh, that should be the ending of all—that this should be the ending! Oh, that I could wash away the past with those tears."

"She finally, rising to her feet; "but I can't do that—the stain is indelible."

She sat down by the fire for a long time, and sobbed and muttered to herself. Then she got up and looked out into the night again.

Minerva Ames met him with a charming smile, extending her hand warmly.

"I am glad you are here," she said, with charming frankness. "I was beginning to fear you had failed to get my note. I was very lonesome."

Lorin Gray took the lily tips of her fingers tenderly in his muscular hand, and, bowing over it with the grace of a courtier, said, in a low voice:

"Thank you, from my heart, Miss Minerva. But, you choose a strange messenger. Do you know the man who brought me the letter?" and he looked at her steadily though respectfully.

"Poor! poor baby!" she exclaimed. "God help you, and God help me."

He shrugged his shoulders and scowled again.

"Unworthy!" she repeated. "There must surely be some mistake here."

"I wish there was," he replied. "Over a year ago, I discovered that, on her leaving school, she formed the acquaintance of a rough farmer, who did not bear the best sort of a character, and, might before last, Rand and I found her almost opposite the Mill Creek House, lying in the mud."

Lucy Watterson clasped her hands in utter astonishment, and looked her brother searchingingly in the eyes as he proceeded.

"While Rand carried her here, I went for a doctor; and it was not until I returned that I knew the wanderer was Elinor Gregg."

"Go on," said Lucy, almost breathless. "Where is she now?"

"That I can not tell you. The night she came here she gave birth to a child, and the next night she fled the house."

"She left which time—"

"Since which time she has neither been seen nor heard from by any person connected with our house."

"Did she leave no clue—no trace?"

"None whatever."

"And the baby?"

"She took with her."

"This sounds like a romance," said Lucy.

"Poor Elinor Gregg, and I always thought she was such a nice girl!"

"So did I," replied Chauncey. "I would have almost staked my life on her honesty. But, you see it's hard to judge some people."

"Very hard," said Lucy, with her eyes fixed upon the ground; "but, did mamma know that Elinor was your old favorite?"

"No; I thought best not to tell her. You know mother is so queer, and she might think that, possibly, I had something to do with Elinor's sin."

"And you mean to keep this a secret?"

"Well, I presume you are right," said Lucy, after a pause; "but, Chauncey, who are you going to marry?"

"Can't you guess?"

"Oh, I'm tired guessing! Please tell me."

"Then I will not tax your patience further. The young lady is named Grace Alward."

"Grace Alward! Pretty, charming Grace Alward!" Lucy was all enthusiasm now. Her eyes sparkled; her cheeks glowed, and she clapped her hands in rapture.

"Yes, Grace," repeated Chauncey. "I would have almost staked my life on her honesty. But, you see it's hard to judge some people."

"Very hard," said Lucy, with her eyes fixed upon the ground; "but, did mamma know that Elinor was your old favorite?"

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your door. How long have you been in?" and she gazed at him keenly.

"Why, some time, my child. I did not feel like coming down. I was tired."

The girl said nothing. At last she removed her eyes from her father's face, and with a half-weary sigh arose to go.

She had not communicated much; it was plain that she had something back. Her father knew it. He stopped her.

"Have you had company to-night? Minerva?" he asked, as, in turn, he bent his eyes upon her.

"Yes, father, and now 'n' of it" was the wearied reply, as the girl resting her hand on the back of the chair, paused and faced her father.

"Who, my child?"

"Lorin Gray, and—"

"Lorin Gray! The impudent scoundrel! How dared he!"

"Lorin Gray is not a scoundrel, father, and you know it!"

Minerva's cheeks kindled into a fresher glow than ever, as she uttered the words with dignity.

"Why, Minerva, what do you mean?"

"I mean that Lorin Gray, whatever his occupation may be, is a gentleman. Moreover, if he had money, none would be welcomed more cordially here, by you, than he."

"Let that go, Minerva," he said pensively. "This man is not rich; 'tis enough. He must cease his visits here. The world will talk. But, was there any one else? Was Mr. Ar—"

"Malcolm Arlington was here, father," interrupted the girl, as her eyes flashed and her bosom heaved.

"Well, my child?"

"He came on an errand; he proposed marriage to me," said Minerva, in tones scarcely audible.

"And, my child?"

"I saved you, father. I accepted him."

And now her voice was a whisper.

CHAPTER XXIV.

BLACK PHIL'S AVOWAL.

WHEN Black Phil had accompanied Bessie Raynor home that night, he lingered for a moment by the door.

The girl had not spoken a word since after viewing that tableau through the open window of Arthur Ames' parlor. She had begged Phil to carry her home. But her unsteady, tremulous movements, her broken, pent-up sighs, which would now and then burst forth, told the man plainer than words what she was suffering.

He had endeavored to speak with her, but receiving no reply, he too, had relapsed into a gloomy silence.

But he lingered by the door after she had said a hasty good-night, and after she had entered the house.

"Bessie," he said, in a soft, subdued voice, as he slightly detained her by holding her shawl, "you've seen a sight to-night—enough to open your eyes, and make you look at certain things in the right light. I have only a word to say, Bessie—only a word or two; then you can go."

He paused; his voice was almost a whisper.

In a startled, frightened manner, Bessie turned toward him. She trembled as she clung to the bolt for support.

"Well, Phil, what would you say?" she asked. "You know I have a wounded brother up-stairs, and—"

"Yes, I know it, Bessie," interrupted the man, though not rudely. He, all at once, seemed to have grown tame in the presence of this frail girl, who was scarcely more than a child. He loved Bessie Raynor, the rough fellow—loved her madly.

"I'll only be a minute, Bessie; if you get tired listening, you can go."

Bessie moved impatiently.

"I know you are exhausted, Bessie; I know that you have gone through a great deal to-night—enough to try stronger nerves than yours. But now is a good time for me to speak, for you can compare my conduct with that of another man you know—one who has given you some signs that he loved you."

Bessie, still clinging to the door-knob, bent her head and listened.

"I know, Bessie," resumed the man, speaking more hurriedly, "that I am a rough-looking fellow; that I am old enough to be your father; that I am ill-favored and forbidding. I know, too, that I am not rich and can not offer you the comforts of a fine home; that I have been, at times, rough to you and Ross; I know that people who don't know any better say I have a wife already; I know that I am not as comely a man as Lorin Gray. Yes, Bessie, all this I know and confess. But listen, and I'll tell you something else I know: I know that Nancy Hurd is not my wife; that I have a good snug pile of money laid up; that I am strong-armed, and full of spirit to work; that Lorin Gray trifles with you, and is false to you; that his heart belongs to one who, though she spurns him and laughs at him, still leads him on, in the end, she may fling him over; that I love you, Bessie Raynor, more than a man of my rude speech can tell, and that I would die for you!"

He paused. His words had grown hot and impulsive; he spoke sincerely, and his hand reached out and grasped hers.

Bessie endeavored to draw back; but the strong hand of the mill-man held her as in a vice.

"Answer me, Bessie," he urged. "Whatever be your reply, I'll be gone at once."

Tremblingly the girl raised her eyes and gazed through the gloom at his face.

"Your words are so sudden, Phil," she said, and her voice was very low, "that I can not answer you now. I feel that I am but a child, Phil, and you know I am surrounded by care and sorrow. My dead father lies in this room"—her voice sunk to a whisper—"and my wounded brother sleeps above. How can I think of anything else? But—"

She paused. Then, summoning her resolution, she continued:

"You may know this, Phil: whatever I may have thought of you in the past, I think better of you now. For your kindness to me this night, I'll always pray God to bless you."

Phil suddenly took her hand more firmly, yet still tenderly, in his, and pressing his bearded lip to it, said:

"May God, if there is one, bless you, too, Bessie! Good-night!"

He turned at once and strode away in the darkness.

Bessie tottered into the room, closing the door behind her.

"Good heavens!" she exclaimed, "what have I done? Have I given that dark-faced man encouragement? Ah—!"

She paused and bent her ear.

(To be continued—Commenced in No. 73.)

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A MASKED MYSTERY OF THE MONUMENTAL CITY.

BY A. P. MORRIS, JR.,
AUTHOR OF "HOODWINKED; OR, DEAD AND ALIVE," ETC., ETC.

A romance of great power and high dramatic quality is to be expected from this popular author, but we think readers will be agreeably surprised in this last work from his hand. It is

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Hold the Reader with its Weird Influence and charm him with its beauty and strength of story. The BLACK CRESCENT is a unique family possession, wrapt in a strange history, and potent in its mysterious power. A lovely and loving young girl drifting to a horrible fate—of marrying her own brother—and finds her fate in a woman

SCORNED, REJECTED, BUT GREAT

—great enough, indeed, to show how immeasurably above all fear, all suffering, all wrong is woman's sense of right.

The scene of the story is in our own time, in one of our great cities, and all the incidents, characters and results read like a revelation—as we half suspect it is—of a remarkable family history. As a serial it is one of the most noticeable of the year, and will add another literary brilliant to the increasing list of STAR PAPERS which fill the columns of

THIS MODEL OF THE WEEKLIES,

THE SATURDAY JOURNAL.

Our Arm-Chair.

Personal—"Charles James" calls our paper "The Precious Journal." "Inkstand" names it the "Glorious Saturday Journal." Miss S. S. C. asks—"Can there be a better paper?" "Sheet-Anchor Tom," like Charles James, regards the paper as a precious one. Miss Della Wright "feels more delight in reading the beautiful pages of the SATURDAY JOURNAL than in all the other weeklies put together." Mrs. Patten Newman says: "I have always taken the monthly magazines and the illustrated papers, supposing them to have the best reading in them; but, a lady friend of mine persuaded me to buy the SATURDAY JOURNAL, and I was greatly surprised at its excellency. In my opinion, it is worth all the monthly magazines put together. It is so fresh, and sparkling, and new." Frank Whipple says: "I call you friends because you are the publishers of my favorite story paper, the SATURDAY JOURNAL, which, I think, is the best weekly paper published in the United States. The stories and sketches are not taken from other or foreign papers. Nearly everybody around our neighborhood takes it." H. W. B. writes: "I have taken your paper for nearly a year, and I like it very much. I think it is ahead of any other story paper published in the United States." Many more such expressions come to us. They are assurances that we have, in truth, "struck the right vein." Our success has been very brilliant, and our promise for the future is something of which we may well boast.

A Model Mother.—There are thousands of such in our land. One who is upon our list of favorite contributors, in a recent note, thus advertises to her circumstances and surroundings:

"I send a few thoughts on an old subject, but they may not be without interest as coming from one who tries to think sometimes, and who is not allowed by circumstances to be an idler in the field—for I am my own house-keeper. Like Dame Quickly, 'I wash, wring, and dry; I scrub, and scold, and do all myself, and besides care for three little children, and write stories at night to eke out a slender income.' I think it is the women who work and think, too, who have a 'right' to decide these questions, so I put in my little protest."

We do like it. When women who are as faithful and true to home, life, and duty as our correspondent, speak on the questions affecting her sex, they have a right to be heard. More such women as our correspondent should speak, if only to show to the world that the Woodhull-Claffin "reformers" are repudiated and scorned by the great mass of American mothers and wives.

She paused. Then, summoning her resolution, she continued:

Mistaken Mercy.—The "Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals" protests against the muzzling of dogs in hot weather. If an unmuzzled whelp could make it convenient, when a fit of hydrocephalus is to bite one of these half-crazy humanitarians, it might change their views of the value of a muzzle, in dog days. There is but one thing better than a muzzle, or a dog at large, in city or country, and that is a half-ounce of lead rightly planted in the dog's front-door.

Answer me, Bessie," he urged. "Whatever be your reply, I'll be gone at once."

Tremblingly the girl raised her eyes and gazed through the gloom at his face.

"Your words are so sudden, Phil," she said, and her voice was very low, "that I can not answer you now. I feel that I am but a child, Phil, and you know I am surrounded by care and sorrow. My dead father lies in this room"—her voice sunk to a whisper—"and my wounded brother sleeps above. How can I think of anything else? But—"

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"May God, if there is one, bless you, too, Bessie! Good-night!"

He turned at once and strode away in the darkness.

Bessie tottered into the room, closing the door behind her.

"Good heavens!" she exclaimed, "what have I done? Have I given that dark-faced man encouragement? Ah—!"

She paused and bent her ear.

(To be continued—Commenced in No. 73.)

Take the savage from his native plain, be it either the flowery prairie, the thorny jungle, or the sandy desert, where the shadowy mirage rises to deceive the way-worn traveler with phantom hopes; place him in civilization's crowded center; he stifles amid the narrow walls, the dark dens, and sighs for freedom and his home. The gilded palace is worth far less to him than the green shrub and the branching tree.

"Son of the wilderness, I turn again to my mother; She gave me truth for an inheritance, and I'll keep it, though my heart should break."

The plain, the forest, or the desert, is his Home. That is why the child of Nature loathes the dwellings of civilization.

The traveler whirled along behind the "Iron Horse" at breath-taking speed, catching glimpses of little houses, barely more than huts, nestled by the wayside. When he thinks of his handsome town residence, or cosy country villa, he wonders how anybody can possibly live in such a place, and shudders at the very thought.

Oh, gentle stranger! that humble cot is somebody's home. The hero of Dow's Flat hits off the idea: "It wasn't much, but it was his."

Some stalwart, red-shirted miner, delving for ore amid the Californian rocks, overshadowed by the great white peaks of the Sierra, or washing for golden sands in the mountain gulch, looks forward to the time when, with great store of wealth, wrung by his strong arm from old earth's bosom, he will return to a little roof-tree, his home, and tell of his victory. How that thoughts nerves his arm!

What makes a home, and gives it its nameless charm, is hard to explain. The millionaire, whose wealth enables him to enjoy all the luxuries of life, oftentimes pines amid the splendor of his noble palace. Something is wanting; and that something money can not buy. He has carpets, into which the foot sinks; furniture of velvet and costly woods; gold and silver plate; every thing to please the eye or gratify the taste, and yet—he is not happy. When he was in the whirl of business, planning how to outstrip his fellows in the race for gold, he did not have time to think of any thing but business; but now that he has "retired," to enjoy the wealth that his brains have won, he suddenly discovers that something is wanting.

From early boyhood he has thought that wealth was every thing—that gold could purchase all in this world that one might desire to have; but, he finds that there are some things that can not be bought by the precious dross for which we poor human worms often peril life and soul.

As he sits in his easy arm-chair, after the dinner hour, and the shadows of eventide begin to gather and close around him, misty forms hover in the long gone by. Again he stands within his childhood's home; a boy once more; eagerly waiting for the hour when he should dash in among the breaking waves of the great life-stream of business, and rely solely upon the strength of his own arms to keep his head above the surface of the waters. Again he sees the gray-haired mother, who thinks her boy is the best and the smartest in the world; the aged father, who sacrifices many a little comfort that his son shall have a good schooling, and a fair start for fortune; their faces are with him in his silent hours. Many a year has come and gone since they were in the flesh. The struggle is over; the victory won; yet the fruits are but dead sea-apples, beautiful to the eye but bitter to the taste. The spoils

are not his; he is compelled to come to the door of the "Golden Age" and stand outside, and beg for alms.

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SATURDAY JOURNAL.

5

DEATH.

BY "CRAPE MYRTLE."

Compose the sculptured limbs,
Lay back the fair young head;
For the dark, relentless grave
Will close the life of the dead.
Fold the pale, cold hands;
Down over the pulseless breast,
Array the sculptured form;
For the grave's unbroken rest.

With gentle step and gentler touch,
Smooth back the silken hair,
From off that marble brow,
Which we deemed in life so fair.
Close still the smiling lips;
And over the violet eyes
Press fast the snowy lid;
To ope in Paradise.

Like some tender, fragile flower
Crushed by the pitiless storm;
We found her sweetly sleeping
Upon her Savior's arm.
Then robe the sculptured limbs,
Now we're mortal clay
For the spirit freed, toward heaven has
winged
Its bright, celestial way.

In the Wilderness.

II.—THE FIRST CAMP.

With the patience and tirelessness of the Indian, old Ben led the way, and the adventurers toiled after. All except the student and Augustus had been accustomed to long marches and bore it well, but the long limbs of Bacon trembled with fatigue and the perspiration burst from every pore as he walked. The student was sustained by an indomitable courage, which made up for the loss of physical power consequent upon months of arduous study. Ben looked back at him from time to time and muttered something, below his breath, complimentary to his pluck, and offered to relieve him of his pack, which kindness he received with thanks, but declined to accept, and Ben, in a whisper to Viator, gave his opinion of the young man in the brief sentence, "he'll do."

At length the brawling of running water was heard, and they came to the brink of a forest stream, bubbling over the stones, sinking now and then into deep, dark pools, the home of the speckled trout, and then dancing downward in long rapids, spotted with roses here and there. The eyes of the fishermen began to glow, but Ben stopped them sternly as they began to fumble for their tackle.

"Hold on, you critters. Don't you teach a rod this night, because every hand must help to build a camp. Come on."

Half a mile further on they came out upon a spot of ground, beside a deep pool, where a boy waited with two pack-horses, upon which had brought up such of their traps as were absolutely necessary to their comfort, and which would have been difficult to carry in a march through the woods. Only one rifle had been brought, a beautiful "Sharp," belonging to Viator, the rest being double-barreled ducking-guns. It was as yet too early in the season for deer, and they were not the men to break the game laws, or suffer it to be done by others. The boy had dumped the packs upon the green-sward and had waited for orders, and when he received them mounted his horse, took the other by the bridle, and rode away through the woods.

"He can not get out of the pines before night comes on," said Viator.

"It's little my boy Ben cares for that," said the guide. "He knows the woods like a book that boy does, and he'll make a camp som'er, hopple the horses, and wait till sun-up. Don't you be afeared for him. square. Seems to pull mighty hard on the greeny here, this tramp does. I told you he was a weedy chicken."

While Viator and the rest were putting the finishing touches to the shelter, old Ben was putting up a cooking-furnace from the loose slate-stones scattered about—an easy job for an old woodman.

"Thar," said Ben, as he glanced with gratified pride at the result of their labors. "That looks ship-shape and orderly, I reckon; jest look at that outlandish critter, square," he cried, pointing to the recumbent form of "Spindle Shanks" stowed away under a tree. "Ef he ain't sound asleep, but'st me! I wish he were a red and I'd raise his ha'r. I would, by gracious! I don't take it kind in you, Square Viator, a-bringin' sech truck out here. Now, you build up a fire, and I'll go down to the pool and take out a few speckled fellers for supper."

And the old guide seized a hatchet, and attacked a rotten log close by. Every few strokes he stopped and fished out a large yellow grub from the rotten wood, which he put in an old tobacco box. After finding about a dozen, he cut a litho pole from the ash, trimmed it with a pocket-knife, attached a hook and line, and, with this primitive tackle, walked away, calling to Spencer, the student, to follow.

Viator built a fire, got out the frying-pan and kettle, and made ready every thing for supper. In half an hour Ben and the student returned with a fine string of the speckled beauties, and the latter declared, with glowing cheeks, that he had caught most of them and enjoyed the sport immensely.

"Oh, I'll put color into the poor lad's face," said Ben. "He's bin stewing over them cussid books till he's a perfect shadur, but the woods was what he wanted! You hear me a talkin'!"

Ben had cleaned the trout as fast as they were caught, and he set to work over them with a skill which no French cook ever equaled, while Viator made coffee.

When all was ready, they sat down to such a feast as the epicureans might have envied. It is true that they had no better forks than their fingers, but they used these skilfully. The trout disappeared as if by magic. For some time nothing was heard save the suppressed notes of delight on the part of the feasters, and as they began to be satisfied they broke out into such encomiums upon Ben's cookery that the old man was fain to be gratified.

"Oh, hush up," he said. "Them chaps down the river don't know what trout ar'. I wouldn't give a cent for a trout that had been more than two hours out of water. We git 'em fresh, with all the juices in 'em, and ef I do say it, I know how to cook a trout! Yaa, I will take a little more of that coffee, square; you know how to make coffee, you do."

He held out his tin cup, which Viator filled, after putting in the proper quantity of condensed milk and sugar, and Ben sat pensively stirring it with a stick and sipping it as it cooled.

"You've led many a party up this river, Ben," said Viator.

"Yaa, square, I hev, for somehow the boys kain't git along without me. You don't know how many friends I've made in the years I've been up here. Thar's many, a man that wears his broadcloth and sits in high places in Albany and York, that would be glad to shake old Ben by the hand, and have a crack over the times we've had here in the North Woods and out by the Saranac and the lakes. Thar ain't but little of it I don't know, boys, and I've bin in places what no other white man ever stepped afore me. I'm a plain man, but when I'm alone in the woods, sometimes, I take off my old hat and look up to the sky, and bless the Giver of such a forest for a hunter to live in. I don't want no better home."

Night came on, and with it came the musketoes, and pipes and cigars were produced and the boys blew a fearful cloud.

Lucky for Spencer, his one bad habit was smoking, and the vicious insects dislike smoke of all things. Unfortunate 'Gustus was the only one in the party who did not smoke, and to him the musketoes paid their undivided attention. While the rest lay placidly smoking, listening to the one thousand and one sounds of the forest by night, poor 'Gustus was fighting the battle of one against a million. He dared not penetrate the misty veil which hung about his companions, for the smoke would make him sick, and he bore his sorrows with muttered words which would not have sounded well in a pulpit.

Laugh and jest, story and song went round among the smokers, but 'Gustus had no delight in these things. The song which claimed his attention was the song of the muskete, and that was getting monotonous. The merriest jest from Viator could not rouse a smile in him, though the jollity of the others was uproarious.

At last, in utter despair, the unfortunate youth grabbed a blanket and dove into the shelter-tent, while, in the words of the immortal Jinks, "a cloud of the enemy followed him, and harassed his rear." The others witnessed his flight with shouts and laughter.

One by one the stars came out in the blue sky, and the moonlight dimpled on the water. The sounds in the forest seem almost deafening to a man new to such sights and sounds. "Croak, croak, croak," from the frogs, "whip-poor-will," from that melancholy bird, "who, who, whoo?" from the horned owl; the shrill cry of the loon, and the wood-duck's call, mingled in strange confusion. Our adventurers sat late in the clear moonlight, and then picking out their blankets, they lay down to sleep under the shadows of the gloomy pines.

A Love Story.

BY MARY REED CROWELL.

THE cold gleam of an April sunlight flashed on the plate-glass windows and rose-pink curtains of Mrs. Dagmar's drawing-room, shining as brightly on the tawny tresses of cold, proud Dell Dagmar, as she bowed to a passing friend, as on Tiny Fay's blue-black curls, that clung about her pure, pale face in such lovely, tendrill-like beauty.

"That was Mr. Elliston. He just passed in that lovely barouche of his, with those sweet white ponies!"

It was Dell Dagmar who spoke so enthusiastically; to whose cold, proud face a little gleam of triumphant satisfaction came as Aymer Elliston raised his hat with such courteous grace; for Miss Dagmar—after due deliberation with prudent, thoughtful merr—had about decided that she would accept the owner of the white ponies and chocolate-colored barouche—when he asked her!

He had been very attentive to the Dagmars, and since there were no young people there, except ugly little Tiny Fay—why, of course, Dell regarded the affair as settled beyond the shadow of a doubt!

"Why don't you look, Tiny, and see him when I tell you?"

Miss Dagmar glanced over at poor, plain little Tiny Fay—countenanced Tiny, whose mother was dead, and who had come to New York to live with Uncle Limeson Dagmar.

Poor child! a homeless home it was to her, where no one seemed to care whether she were sick or well, or happy or wretched. And what is more wretched than a loveless pony?

"And he's turning around—there, Mr. Jerald has met him, and, I do believe, they're coming here! Run, Tiny, and pull down that green shade in the conservatory! It will serve to hide the wretched rouging me that tell you to?"

So, while Dell setted her white cashmere morning-wrapper, and adjusted a coquettish curl over her forehead, Tiny ran to adjust the shade for the beauty's benefit. When she returned, Mr. Elliston and Mr. Jerald were laughing and chattering with Dell.

Tiny took her seat in her own little nook by the side window, thinking how very melodious Mr. Elliston's voice was; and wondering if she ever would conquer that miserable, lonely, homesick feeling!

Then Dell's voice, tuned to a sharper key than she had ever noted, fell distinctly on her ears.

"No! Mr. Elliston, you do not mean it!" Elliston smiled—Tiny peeped between the drooping curtains and saw it all.

"Surely, Mr. Jerald can have no reason for misinforming you, Miss Dagmar."

"And you'll be obliged to settle on a farm? Oh, that will be dismal! quite a change from Broadway, and the white ponies!"

"A farm wagon and a plowman's pack, I presume you mean to say?"

There was bitterness in Mr. Elliston's tones, and Tiny could see the paleness of his face as he discussed the news of his sudden downfall. She thought it was because he was so troubled.

Dell was proffer of her sympathy in a cold, hard, heartless way, that made Tiny's eyes flash in unwonted anger.

Then Mr. Elliston signified his intention of bidding the lady good-morning.

"Oh, hush up," he said. "Them chaps down the river don't know what trout ar'. I wouldn't give a cent for a trout that had been more than two hours out of water. We git 'em fresh, with all the juices in 'em, and ef I do say it, I know how to cook a trout! Yaa, I will take a little more of that coffee, square; you know how to make coffee, you do."

He hesitated for a mild expression of her thoughts; Mr. Elliston frowned, and looked at his friend, Jerald.

"Exactly. I comprehend fully the situation. Mr. Elliston peniless is hardly a desirable addition to the fashionable circle in which the Dagmar's move."

He bowed with frigid courtesy, and Dell felt a pang of regret in her heart that she was so bound down by the codes of society

that she must give up the one bright dream of her selfish life.

"Perhaps you will convey my respectful regards to your cousin, Miss Fay? I never see her, lately. She is not ill, I hope?"

Tiny's heart gave a great flutter behind those rose-pink curtains.

"Oh, no; she is not sick. Tiny!"

Tiny heard the preemtory summons, and the hot blood mounted to her very temples.

"Tiny! Mr. Elliston wishes you."

So the plain-faced, curly-haired girl came forward, with such a shy, sweet grace, that Elliston wondered he never had observed it before. Involuntarily he extended his hands to greet her; and little Tiny, through her blushes, managed to bow and murmur some inaudible words, wondering what if Dell had discarded Mr. Elliston because Mr. Jerald had said he had lost his property, and feeling quite sure that it was the first time that Dell ever had summoned her to Mr. Elliston's presence.

To be sure they had met often and often during that long season, but, it was only for a few minutes, and then Tiny perfectly comprehended that she was to retire and leave a clear field for peerless Dell.

Mr. Elliston held her hands and looked down in her eyes a moment; Dell smiled a little impudently, and Mr. Jerald turned to see if the horses were quiet.

"You are a barefaced creature, Tinetta Fay! I am ashamed of you! and however you dared do such a bad, unwarrantable thing, is more than I can tell."

Miss Dell Dagmar scowled at the girl who had just entered the room, her jaunty hat and saucy still on, her short curly hair blown up over her pink, air-kissed cheeks.

Tiny stopped short, and looked inquiry-ly up at Dell.

"Why, what have I done?"

"What have you done, sure enough?" mimicked Dell, her face growing pale with passion, "as if you are so innocent, you sickening thing you!"

Tiny's lips quivered; it was so hard to have her feelings wounded at the caprice of her passionate cousin.

"You've played your game admirably, you deceitful woman! You've never mentioned a word to mamma or I about meeting Mr. Elliston every time you went for a walk down the avenue! But we found you out, silly, artful minx! and now, you may just walk out of this house faster than you can walk in! Mamma saw Mr. Elliston, and he's coming here this very evening, and such a character as I shall give him of you!"

Tiny's lips did not tremble now; she drew her slight, graceful figure proudly up; her eyes grew indignant, and she looked Dell full in the face.

"Spare your words, Dell Dagmar! I will gladly leave this house to-night, for I had intended going very soon at all events.

As to Mr. Elliston, I do not know that you should object to my seeing him, if he chose and I chose. When he was rich, he was too good for you, me thought. Now that he is poor, I suppose you think I am of your opinion—that he should be beneath my notice!"

Dell's eyes flashed at Tiny's unusual spirit.

"Perhaps you are in love with him?" she remarked, scornfully.

Tiny's cheek flushed; then she answered, quietly:

"Perhaps I am!"

Dell gave a scream of rage.

"You brazen creature! And I dare venture to say, you'd marry him if he asked you."

"Yes, I think I should, if he asked me," Tiny replied, quietly.

A sudden gleam of satisfaction lighted Dell Dagmar's eyes. Then they were not engaged, after all! She had been so afraid it had gone that far. Of course, now that she had learned that the news regarding Mr. Elliston had only been a mischievous canard by his friend, Mr. Jerald, Dell had decided to win him to her side again; and her heart went out longingly after the white ponies and their stylish owner.

But, little Tiny had taken advantage of the position; and Dell was fearful lest Tiny now had the game!

Well, she would make a last desperate struggle; and the first move was to order Tiny from the house, and then invite Mr. Elliston to spend an evening.

So, proudly silent, Tiny Fay walked down the brown-stone steps, and up the wide avenue, wondering where she should lay her head that night; and feeling a definite security in the possession of a twenty-dollar gold piece in her portemonnaie at that moment.

She could go to a hotel for the night, at any rate; and, on the morrow, she would obtain a situation.

She turned the corner a little absorbed in her reveries, and almost walked over—Mr. Elliston!

The servants had lighted the parlors, and arranged every thing in faultless order.

Mrs. Dagmar, in a heavy, trailing black silk, walked about in a flutter of delight,

for her favorite had been away so long; and she was fully armed with her graceful little apologies.

In her elegant dressing-room, Dell was preparing her toilette to do full honor to the occasion: A costly dress of light-blue silk, richly trimmed with velvet—one that Mr. Elliston had only been a mischievous canard by his friend, Mr. Jerald, Dell had decided to win him to her side again.

She arranged her hair in floating curls, and left off all jewelry, excepting her watch and chain—because Mr. Elliston did, not like jewelry except of a useful nature.

She went down to the parlors, and left the glow of color on her cheeks, and a vivid flush to her eyes.

She was beautiful, and she knew it; she was possessed of a happy tact, and she knew that too. Mr. Elliston had loved her—or seemed to—and she was confident she would win him to her side again.

Sitting by the register, reading, she heard the carriage drive rapidly to the door, then stop; she heard Mr. Elliston come up the steps; the ring followed, then his tread on the velvet carpet, and she arose with a smile of warmest welcome.

"Mr. Elliston! I am so glad to see you again! You can form no idea how I have missed you. We all were so anxious to see you."

He laughed gayly; and Dell's heart gave a sudden leap of ecstasy to note how like the old times, in his manner, he was.

"Yes," he said, looking earnestly at her; "I, too, wanted to see you and Mrs. Dagmar, very particularly. You can not imagine why?"

Dell raised her brilliant eyes to his; then the rich blood suffused her cheeks.

"How should I know, Mr. Elliston?"

"Because you are so nearly concerned, Dell. Will you grant me the favor I am about to ask?"

wish the murdered man out of the way—we shall find it difficult to fix the crime upon the person, even though, in our own minds, we may feel confident that we have put our hands upon the actual murderer," the Judge said, slowly and deliberately.

"I think that my evidence will furnish all the proof necessary to convict the murderer," Rennet replied.

"Indeed?" questioned the Judge, earnestly.

"Yes; some few days ago, while under the influence of liquor, Tendall uttered some careless words. At the time I paid but little attention to them; but, now, I am sure that they will serve as a clue as to who and what his assassin is."

"And those words?"

"Had reference to the person who was paying him to keep his tongue still. I guessed at once who it was, and, now, after the discovery that Bill and I made a little while ago, I feel sure that I can prove who it was that killed Tendall."

"I can hardly find it in my heart to admit this dreadful suspicion," Jones said, slowly.

"It is dreadful, but looks are sometimes deceptive. I think that if we proceed cautiously and promptly, we shall be able to find some other important proofs," Rennet observed.

"You think, then, that we had better act at once?"

"Yes," Rennet replied.

"Very well; I'll leave you in charge of the house and the body while I'll go and rouse the citizens. We shall have to call upon the Vigilantes in this matter; Injun Dick and his friends will probably attempt to give us trouble. Now that we have got our hand in, we might as well rid Spur City of two or three bad characters, or else string 'em up at the end of a rope as a warning. I think that we had better not proceed to active measures until morning. Do you think that there is any danger of the party attempting to escape?"

"No," Rennet replied; "all is dark in the room—gone to bed, of course."

"Plucky, eh?"

"More bravado than any thing else."

"Well, you and Bill keep watch here. After day-break the Vigilantes will act." With this assurance, Judge Jones took his departure.

"I feel like a durned fool in this hyer matter," Bill blurted out. "I wish I'd driv' my coach back to Austin instead of lettin' 'em go in my place; but, I won't believe it, darned if I will."

"You'll find out before to-morrow night," Rennet said, dryly. Then he examined his watch. "Half after two; we shan't have a great while to wait until day-break. Suppose you go in the room there and bring out a couple of chairs."

"What, whar' the dead man is?"

"Yes."

"No, I'm durned ef I do!" exclaimed Bill, with a shiver. "I ain't afraid of much in this world, but I don't go in thar' agin till daylight, you bet!"

"Why, Bill, you're a coward."

"I kin eat the man that says it, ef you'll only cut off his ears an' greeze his head," Bill replied, stoutly. "Sides, that ain't any chears in thar'! I reckon you think that you're in New York or 'Frisco, a-callin' fur chears so hand."

"Perhaps there's a box round the entry somewhere?" Rennet suggested.

"I seed one a while ago, under the stairs," said Bill, after thinking for a moment.

Rennet took the candle, found the box, and brought it with him to his former station. Then the two sat down upon it and kept vigilant watch, though, as Bill observed, "it wan't much use to watch a dead man, 'cos he wouldn't run away, no how you could fix it."

Rennet did not take the trouble to inform the stage-driver that he was watching the living and not the dead.

The express office was dimly lit by a half a dozen candles, burning in the tin sconces attached to the walls.

The flickering light fell upon a half a dozen stern and resolute faces. The Vigilante leaders were gathered in council. Judge Jones sat at his desk; the others were seated around him. The most prominent men in Spur City were represented there.

Quietly they had assembled at the Judge's summons, roused from their slumbers by the call to duty.

The Judge made a short speech, recounting the full particulars of the murder of Gains Tendall, to which the others listened attentively.

"And now, fellow-citizens," said the Judge, after completing his recital. "I think that the time for action is come. I think that the strong right arm of justice should be felt by the rogues that harbor in our midst; it is time that they be taught a lesson. The Vigilantes must rise, take a hand in the game, and wipe out these scoundrels. Spur City needs purifying, fellow-citizens, and upon us devolves that duty."

The three pulled rein in front of the express office and dismounted.

"Say, Judge!" cried Brown, breathless, "we've corralled the critter!"

"Who?" asked Jones, in astonishment.

"Overland Kit!"

Each one of the little knot of men, grouped by the door of the shanty, started at this intelligence, and exclamations of astonishment rose in the air.

"You have captured Overland Kit?" the Judge asked, quickly.

"You bet!" replied the man-from-Red-Dog, in triumph.

"Where? where?" questioned all, gathering around the three in eager excitement.

"Up in the mountains; but he's passed in his checks," Brown said.

"Dead!" The Spur-Cityites were disappointed.

"I reckon that that ain't any more life in him than in a dead mule's tail," Jim observed.

"Tell us about it!" one of the citizens exclaimed.

Brown briefly recounted how they had discovered the body of the road-agent, covered with wounds, behind the massive boulders.

"Bore the marks of a desperate fight, eh?" Jones said.

"I reckon he did," Brown replied; "he was reg'lar clawed up."

Jones guessed at the truth in an instant. He remembered what the ruffian, Joe Rain, had said in regard to Overland Kit. It was plain to him that Kit had tracked Rain, had attempted to punish him for his treachery, but had perished in the struggle.

"We kivered the body up with rocks so as to keep the wolves from it, Judge; but the critters had commenced on the fact afore we got there," Brown said.

"Well, I suppose that you may as well let it be just where it is," said Jones, after thinking for a moment.

"But, I say; what's b'ilin', anyway, fur to bring you out of your roosts so early?" Brown asked.

"There has been a murder committed; we are going to arrest the criminal, and if

"No; I don't think any thing of the

kind," Haynes replied, bluntly; "but I don't believe in giving a dog a bad name and then hanging him right off. I go in for justice every time. I don't say but what our town would be better without Dick Talbot than with him; but, I ain't sure of it. I'm perfectly willing to ask him to leave town if the sentiment of our citizens is that way; but it ain't, and I know that it ain't. And I tell you, right out, fair and square, Judge, if we try to string Injun Dick up without reason, we'll have our hands full!"

"I kinder think Haynes is right there," said another one of the citizens.

"But if the evidence proves that Talbot had a hand in the murder of this miner, Tendall?" asked the Judge.

"Why, then we'll have a right to put him through," replied Haynes; "but I say, Judge, we'll give him a fair shake."

"Certainly; we will justice on our side," the Judge said, blandly.

"Be sure you're right, then go ahead?" Haynes said.

"Of course; unless we represent the whole of Spur City, our power amounts to but little. The people must be with us and not against us. The honest and peaceable citizens must feel that we are doing them a service in ridding our community of the desperate cases who have sought refuge here, or we shall be acting with our hands tied."

"A murmur of assent told that this point was well taken. A course of action was soon resolved upon, and an hour after day-break fixed upon as the time of action.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE ARREST.

The leaders of the Vigilantes dispersed to call out their friends. Bowie-knives and revolvers were in demand. The rising of the Vigilantes was something new for Spur City. The mining camp had never been "purified," to use the western expression.

Dark forms flitted like spectral figures from shanty to shanty in the early morning gloom.

There is something irresistible in Judge Lynch's summons.

The first gray lights of the morning were beginning to appear above the horizon. The darker shades of night were flying fast before the coming of the day-god.

Judge Jones and two or three of the committee stood in front of the express office in private consultation.

The programme was that the Vigilantes should not show their hands openly at first, but in case of an attempt by the rough element to obstruct the career of justice, to rise and make a terrible example of the ring-leaders.

At last the Judge thought that the chances were in his favor. The discussion was ended that he had been taking an active part in, and he leaned back against the corner of the shanty. The first light of the morning, struggling through the mist and vapors of the dying night, illuminated his iron-like face. A look of satisfaction gleamed in his cold eyes.

As he leaned carelessly against the corner of the building, his arms folded across his massive chest, and his eyes fixed on the peak of the far-off Sierra, gleaming bluish-white in the misty light, he seemed more like the statue of an ancient Roman, fantastically robed in the garb of modern times, than a living, breathing pioneer of the great Western advance-guard of American civilization.

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solved to be no more cast down, or allow myself to be despondent. If it was God's pleasure that I was to remain upon the island for my lifetime, I must submit to His will; but, if He saw fit to have me taken from it, He would do it in His own good time."

"Your story is a very wild one, and sounds like a novel," said Mr. Atkins.

"It is a true one; and, as I told you how I was punished for murmuring, I must now tell you, how I was rewarded for my submission. One day, as I was reading over Ben's old scrap-book, I came to the passage: 'When you are in trouble, remember that the Lord will provide.' I looked up, and saw a vessel coming directly to the place where I was sitting. The captain, on hearing my story, was surprised. Taking me on board of his ship, we sailed for home."

"On the vessel was an old gentleman who was returning home from India, to spend the remainder of his days among his kindred and friends. On the voyage, which was a stormy one after I came on board, the old man was taken ill, and, as every one else was engaged in handling and taking care of the vessel during the storm, it devolved upon me to nurse and make the invalid as comfortable as might be."

"This I cheerfully did, waiting upon him day and night, administering his medicines, reading to him during the long days, and relating for his amusement the adventurous story of my shipwreck, and how I lived on the island."

"But all was to no purpose. The thread of the old man's life was run out; and one day, after being left alone with the captain and another passenger, who proved to be a lawyer, for several hours, he sent for me, made me good-bye, and in a few hours was dead."

"After the burial, the captain summoned me to the cabin, and displayed a will, by which I was made the sole heir to all the old man's wealth."

"And you have all his property?" said Jessie.

"Yes, all; but the dearest property I have now, is you, my darling girl. Would to Heaven your angel mother could have been spared to see this day."

"For that you must blame me," answered Mr. Atkins. "Had it not been for my selfish and foolish pride of caste, this might have been prevented."

But Jessie's father replied. "Let the dead past, bury it dead."

"The skeleton in the woods still remains a mystery to me," said Henry.

"And, until the last great day, must remain so. The only conclusion I can arrive at is this: The man who robbed me must have been going through the forest, when he was seized with a fit," answered Jessie's father.

"Faith! And I'd like to find a father wid a heap o' money," said Pat.

"Your kindness to Jessie must never be forgotten, and a home with you shall always have," replied Mr. Murker.

"If I wasn't a youngster, and you wasn't the true gentleman that ye are, I'd be afeir calling you a 'broth o' a boy!'"

"Pat is a noble fellow, and it is to him that we owe Jessie's preservation," said Henry.

Mrs. Smart had her house full that night, and her guests were visited with calm and pleasant dreams.

The two men, whose lives had been so suddenly terminated, were buried the next day. Their lives had not been good ones, and we can, without a regret, dismiss them from the scene.

CHAPTER XIII.

EXTINQUISHING THE LIGHTS.

WHENCE this clapping?—whence these loud braves? It is indeed a gala night, and the — theater is crammed from floor to ceiling. It is the benefit and last appearance of the "Boy Clown." Yes, after to-night, he retires from his public life. Mr. Atkins has offered Henry a home, which has, this time, been accepted. Perhaps the knowledge that Jessie's father has purchased a plantation adjoining it, has had something to do with his decision.

The time had come for Henry's farewell speech, and as he was preparing to utter it, the manager, in behalf of the company, presented him with a magnificent gold watch and chain.

"Kind friends," said the Boy Clown, "let me thank you, one and all, for your kindness. What is life, after all, but a circus-ring? We are continually striving for some great end. We leap over banners, either to fall on the ground of poverty, or land safely and firmly on the good stool, prosperity. As a circus must always have a clown, so must life have its jesters, and as John Owens says in "Solon Shingle," it's jest so."

The Boy Clown's task was over, and as he threw off his motley suit, he gave a sigh, as though he repented of what he was about to do. But, the thoughts of Jessie cheered him. He dressed and went in search of his party who were waiting for him in front of the theater.

Early the next day Atkins, Murker, Jessie, Henry and Pat started for their Southern home. Pete and Dinah were the first to notice their arrival, and many were the bows and courtesies bestowed upon them. Mrs. Atkins had many a start of fright when she heard all that had happened, but she said she always did doubt Jessie's being Hinchley's daughter. There was a visit to the churchyard by all of our group, and many a tear fell on the tombstone marked, "Lizzie." Perhaps her spirit watched them, and was pleased. Who can tell? Lizzie's life had been a sad one. Cast away from home, she had wandered with her child, until she reached the hut of the old woman, where she left the infant. She was made to believe that both her husband and child were dead.

But, why linger over these sad scenes? Lizzie is in a happier land, where she will be joined by those she loved.

Pete and Dinah had a grand hand, and Pete "clar'd to goodness dat he'd never tasted better fixin's to de geese or chickens" and "dat dem geese never had better hands laid on dem, dan Miss Dinah's."

"Lor's, Pete, you make dis nigger rain, and vanity is a cryin' evil and a sin. Dem geese hasn't got no feelin's, for if dey had I wouldn't be so cruel as to hurt dem," answered Dinah.

"Well, Dine, you didn't seem to know how cruel you treated me once, when you 'fused to hab me."

"You oughter opened your testiment and found consolidation (consolation) dere."

"So I did, Dine, so I did, but de good book said, 'it is not good for man to live alone,' and dat book allers speaks de trufe."

"Well, you's got me now and you oughter be satisfied."

While they were dancing and feasting, a wagon drove up, driven by our friend the peddler. He had been traveling, and learning that his once-companions were staying at the Atkinses, had made them a call. He brought them the news of the death of the old woman who had the care of Jessie. Her "darter with the pension" was there, and endeavored to set her cap for the peddler, but he followed Sam Weller's advice, and "bawed of the wide's."

Our young Irish lad, Pat, worked on Mr. Murker's plantation, as he said he "was bound to arm his board."

One day, Henry received a letter from his former friend, Charles Morton, informing him of a severe illness. Henry at once wrote for him to come and make him a visit. He had not forgotten his midnight vigil.

"Ah! Charley," said Henry, as they were together, "I little thought that day when you told me to beware of Hinckley, so many ills and perils would surround me. Pat will insist that, as I have escaped from death so many times, I must have been born to give it."

"I scarcely think his prophecy will turn out a true one. Perhaps Jessie is the one to hang, but it will be around your neck, and that kind of a chain you wouldn't mind."

Henry blushed.

"Why should you blush, Henry? Jessie is a good girl, and you are a good boy. You love her, and she—"

"Does she love me?"

"Of course; why should she not?"

"I've sometimes thought, since you have been here, that she came over to see you very often."

"Jealous, Henry? You have no need to be. She loves none but you, and I hope to get well enough to dance at your wedding. So you needn't let the green-eyed monster attack you again. She is an angel of sympathy and kindness. She feels friendship for me—nothing more; but it is love she has for you."

Charles was right. Young as they were, they had each deserved the other's love.

A little more to say, and our story is done.

Where he had originally come from, none of us knew, though there was a rumor that, when he was but a mere boy, his father and eldest brother had been foully murdered by a secret enemy, and that the shock had killed his mother, thus leaving him alone in the world. This rumor further said that Rowan had persistently hunted the murderer, since then, but had never succeeded in running him to earth, and that he was now pursuing his present course of life in hopes of discovering him somewhere amid the Western wilds.

Numbers carried the day, and, sorely against the judgment of the older rangers, we broke camp and turned our horses' heads toward the jornada.

Pressing rapidly forward, all eager, now that we had fully determined on the venture, to make the attempt to reach the golden valley, although we well knew how great was the difficulty and how fearful the danger always is in crossing a desert of any considerable size.

How great the extent of the one that lay before us we knew not—our only guide being the direction of the Indian, who had said, ride three days due west from a certain known locality, and we would strike somewhere in the neighborhood.

By noon of the day following we observed the timber thinning out fast, and here and there, patches of sandy soil cropping out.

Charles is rapidly improving in health, and, at his own desire, will rejoin his circus. Mr. and Mrs. Atkins find in their son-in-law a noble and upright man, and proud of him they are too. He is assiduous for their welfare, and his care of the grave of the dead Lizzie proves how much he loved her.

Jessie is loved by all, especially by Henry.

And of the young gentleman who serves as a title to these gathered threads? Does he not deserve a happy life? He has it now. But, in the future, he sees a vision of leading Jessie to the altar as his bride; and between you and me, kind reader, the vision will prove a true one. The Boy Clown's record is done. He has had many an adventure, and if the narrator has failed to depict his career as would an able pen, be lenient and criticise not too harshly.

The circus is out.

Extinguish the lights!

THE END.

The Son's Revenge.

BY CARLOS B. DUNNING.

COME, rout out, Ned! we've determined to be off to-day. The Indian has come in, and brings the best kind of news. By Jove! we'll make the fly fly this trip, or I'm mighty out of it!"

Such were the words that saluted me on walking from a sound sleep, as I swung in my hammock under the perch of a house in Albaquerque.

Our party, numbering twenty-nine, all mountain-men without exception, had been waiting several days for the return of our Indian runner, who had agreed to bring us certain information in regard to the country we proposed penetrating.

Some of the boys had objected, and seriously, to start with the above number, asserting it was an unlucky one, and insisting that an effort should be made to secure one more, and thus make the even thirty. One or two of the old trappers strongly advocated this, and finally it was decided to try and secure a suitable man to join us.

The circus was over, and as he threw off his motley suit, he gave a sigh, as though he repented of what he was about to do. But, the thoughts of Jessie cheered him. He dressed and went in search of his party who were waiting for him in front of the theater.

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the great unknown tract that stretches away to the Wasatch mountains on the north and to the west, no man knew how far.

I need not dwell upon the general features of that long, and, as it proved to be, terrible tramp.

Although we entered and passed through the finest hunting-grounds that any present had ever seen, yet we were possessed with the idea that better still lay beyond, and at length whispers of gold-hunting began to be heard among some of the younger rangers.

Our Indian scout had uttered some vague hints as to a certain valley, rich in treasure, that lay upon the further side of a desert reach; and, with this view, the majority lost sight of the real object of the expedition.

In the discussion that ensued, Verde Oakley took sides with neither party. He was still indifferent as to where we went, and, at length, as we were to give him his vote, he declined, with the assertion that he had no right to a voice in the matter.

There was another of the party who manifested a like indifference, but, as he was an old comrade, and we were used to his ways, nothing was said to him upon the subject.

Elridge, or, as he was better known, Ridge Rowan, had joined our party a year or so previous to the present time, and, as he was known to have served under Jack Hayes, he was, of course, a welcome addition to the "Free Rangers," as we were termed.

"I say I loved Edward Rowan like a brother, and so I did, but, in an evil hour, we both fixed our affections upon the same object. He won her, and I went out into the world, not a heart-broken man, but one who had determined to live henceforth only for a fixed, unalterable purpose. That purpose was the destruction of the man who had wrecked my life. How many years I awaited! Outwardly his friend, I sat at his fireside, partook of his food, played with his children, and in more than one case stood between him and pecuniary ruin. I was but waiting. For as the time went by, and I saw his happiness, my hatred grew more bitter, and I finally determined to strike a double blow.

"One night, while walking upon the cliffs that overlooked the river, I beat him down with a heavy club, and hurled his body over the fearful chasm. His eldest boy was a little way off. I called to him, and, without a moment's pang, seized the innocent child, and cast him out to meet death on the jagged rocks below. The mother—"

"Died! Perished of a broken heart, you double-dyed villain!" shouted, though the tones were weak, a hoarse voice behind me, and before I could interpose in any way, Ridge Rowan had thrown himself upon the dying man, with one hand upon his throat, and the other plying his long, keen knife with desperate force and rapidity.

So quickly was the thing done that I was completely taken by surprise, and, when I succeeded in dragging the now raving man from off his victim, the latter's spirit had fled through a dozen ghastly wounds.

The only words uttered by Rowan were, "I have found him at last," and these he continued to repeat over and over again.

The sudden excitement, combined with the excessive physical prostration, had, as I have intimated, made the young man a raving madman.

We confined his arms with a lariat, and next morning, after burying Oakley, we reviewed the terrible march.

We were nearer safety than we thought, for, by noon, we had reached a small belt of timber, bordering upon a small stream of water, and here we rested for the rest of the day and night.

We eventually succeeded, after having lost nearly half our number, in reaching Albaquerque, where, by carefully nursing ourselves, we recovered from that terrible march over the jornada.

Young Rowan eventually recovered both mental and physical balance, yet he was never the same man, and not long afterward he was killed by a party of Comanches at Horsehead Crossing, on the Pecos.

The thought of having stabbed to death a man who was even then dying, appeared to weigh heavily upon his conscience, and I have no doubt he sought his fate purposely.

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To go forward was now looked upon as certain death; to return fully as desperate.

The water had given entirely out, not a drop remaining, and no earthly prospect of obtaining any.

One by one the animals fell, overcome by the intense heat of the sun from above, and that of shimmering sands under foot.

The knife then rapidly did its work, and every drop of precious blood was caught from the gaping wound in the poor brute's throat, to be equally divided among the six men.

Six days of this terrible suffering, and then a gap in our ranks. We buried him in the sand, and again began our weary tramp on the return path.

But why dwell upon those terrible days?

Nearly half our number had fallen and died by the wayside, and still we staggered forward, our faces to the east. At length, just at nightfall, the stranger, Verde Oakley, gave out, and declared that he could go no further.

His powerful frame had shrunk almost to a skeleton; his face had taken on that hard, drawn look so peculiar to the near approach of death, and

